

House, and the hundreds of voices who have contributed to the legacy and success of this organization.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2003*

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on rollcall vote No. 408, I am recorded as having voted, "No". I would like the RECORD to show that I, in fact, support the Otter amendment and I intended to vote, "Yes". I hope that it is retained in the final version of the Commerce-Justice-State Appropriations Act.

#### HONORING KGMC-TV

##### HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2003*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor KGMC-TV in Fresno, CA for their impressive support for our community. In 2002, KGMC-TV donated a total of 464 spots of valuable airtime towards Ad Council public service announcements.

Throughout the Ad Council's 60-year history, stations like KGMC-TV have helped to address the most pressing social issues of the day. Each year, the Ad Council receives approximately \$1.3 billion in donated media for over 40 campaigns to promote awareness about topics ranging from high-school drop-out prevention to AIDS awareness.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor KGMC-TV for their ongoing dedication to informing the 19th district of current and socially important issues that improve the lives of our constituents and our Nation.

#### A TRIBUTE TO ALLEN B. GRESHAM FOR FOUR DECADES OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

##### HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2003*

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to pay tribute to Allen B. Gresham, a legendary attorney and highly respected community leader for more than four decades in San Bernardino County, California. Mr. Gresham is retiring from full-time practice after 41 years of building one of the top legal firms in Inland Southern California, and nearly as long helping make our community a better place.

My friend Allen Gresham grew up in El Centro, California and received his law degree from Stanford University before joining a San Bernardino law firm in 1959. In just 3 years, he was named as a partner, and became the senior partner by 1978. Gresham, Savage, Nolan and Tilden now has 27 lawyers and is one of the most respected and accomplished law firms in Southern California.

Mr. Gresham served as president of the San Bernardino County Bar Association in 1969 and as a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers for the past 25 years. He was named one of the "Best Lawyers in America" for the past decade, and was honored as one of the top lawyers in America in 2001. He was selected as one of the top five business litigators in the Inland Empire in that year, as well.

Almost from the beginning, Allen Gresham was active in our community. He has been a member of the Kiwanis Club of San Bernardino since 1960, and has been a director of Arrowhead United Way since 1964. He was a director of the San Bernardino County Symphony Association from 1967 to 1973 and rejoined the board in 1989—serving as its president for the next 4 years.

In 1971, Mr. Gresham stepped up his activities dramatically, beginning 32 years of service in two groups that have helped ensure that San Bernardino County grows economically and in its educational opportunities. He was elected to the Board of Trustees of the San Bernardino Community College District—and has been reelected for 8 consecutive terms. As board chairman for 3 of those terms, Mr. Gresham has helped a sleepy community college of a few thousand students grow into an academic powerhouse that today serves more than 30,000 on two campuses.

In that same year, Mr. Gresham joined Inland Action, Inc., a service group formed by community leaders to maximize the economic development of San Bernardino County, and to ensure that the county retains the benefits of Norton Air Force Base. Over my 25 years in Congress, I have worked closely with Allen Gresham and the other members of Inland Action to keep the Inland Empire high in the attention of the Federal Government. Although Norton was closed in 1988, the group has continued to strive for economic progress, and was a significant factor in winning community control of the former base in 1998. There is no doubt in my mind that the efforts of Allen Gresham and the other members of Inland Action has helped ensure that San Bernardino County is on course to be an economic powerhouse for decades to come.

I have always looked forward to the annual Inland Action trips to Washington—not least because a meeting with Allen Gresham was always a joy. He provides a combination of personal stability with an amazing ability to laugh at himself and bring laughter to those around him. His engaging and informed participation is one of the reasons Inland Action has forged numerous ties to lawmakers and federal officials that have paid off handsomely for the San Bernardino area.

Allen Gresham has received many well-deserved honors over his life of community service. He was named Citizen of the Year by the local board of realtors in 1975, Distinguished Citizen by the Military Airlift Command in 1988, Citizen of Achievement by the League of Women Voters in 1991 and received the San Bernardino County Bar Association's "John B. Surr Award" for outstanding service to the legal profession in 1999.

Mr. Speaker, as Allen Gresham retires from active practice, he is also stepping down from his role in Inland Action to give him more personal time with his wonderful wife of 49 years, Clara Thompson Gresham. Please join me in wishing them well in their retirement years, and thanking them for all of the many, many years they have devoted to their community.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES OPPORTUNITY ACT

##### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2003*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Workers with Disabilities Opportunity Act of 2003" with Representative MATSUI (D-CA) and 34 other colleagues. This bill will remove a persistent employment barrier facing Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities who want to attempt to return to work—the fear of losing their health insurance. Right now, these workers lose their Medicare health insurance coverage if they remain in the workforce more than 8.5 years. This legislation would make Medicare coverage permanent for them.

There is a glaring problem with the American workforce today. There are a disproportionately small number of workers with disabilities in it. According to the Census Bureau's 2002 report, only 24 percent of American adults with disabilities are employed compared to 77 percent of other Americans. The National Organization on Disability reports that despite major advances in disability services and technologies, less than 1 percent of Social Security Disability Insurance enrollees leave the rolls each year to return to work. When the non-working adults with disabilities were asked in the National Health Interview Survey why they were discouraged from working over one-fifth of them replied that it was out of fear of losing their health insurance. With this piece of legislation we can remove this barrier.

People who receive Social Security disability insurance benefits risk losing the health insurance coverage they currently have if they return to work. While you may think that their job's health benefits may cover what they need, many employers do not offer health insurance and even if they do, the treatments workers with disabilities require may well not be covered by a standard employer-provided plan. This puts many Social Security beneficiaries in a dilemma. They must choose between staying at home and keeping their health insurance or going to work and losing it. There is no question about it; this Hobson's choice is keeping disabled Americans out of the workforce.

Some of you may ask: "Well, what about existing law?" The answer is that existing law does not do nearly enough. Under current law, Medicare coverage only extends for 8.5 years after a Social Security beneficiary returns to work. While this may sound like an adequate amount of time to become integrated into the workforce, keep in mind that people with a physical or mental disability often require ongoing care. Their health, often their lives, and certainly their ability to sustain work, depend on that care.

The Workers with Disabilities Opportunity Act is critical for removing the fear of returning to work for the millions of Americans with disabilities. We had bipartisan support for the original House version of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act that extended Medicare coverage to 8.5 years for workers with disabilities. We hope to have bipartisan support for making this improvement